तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 151 *Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications*
28 April 2007 *Śrī Mohinī Ekādaśī*, 26 *Madhusudana*, 521 *Gaurābda* Circulation, 1,901

Highlights

• **Ideal Household Life**
His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• **The Battle Between Prahlad Maharaja and Lord Narayan**
Śrī Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta *1.4.11*

• **The Greatest Fool**
Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

• **In Praise of the Divine Couple**
Sripad Madhavendra Puri

Ideal Household Life

His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Translation and purport to
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, madhya *3.41*

prathame pāka kariyāchena ācāryāṇī
viṣṇu-samarpaṇa kaila ācārya āpani

All the eatables were first cooked by the wife of Adwaita Acharya. Then Srila Adwaita Acharya personally offered everything to Lord Vishnu.

PURPORT: This is the ideal householder's life. The husband and wife live together and the husband works very hard to secure paraphernalia for worshiping Lord Vishnu. The wife at home cooks a variety of foods for Lord Vishnu, and the husband offers it to the deity. After that, *ārati* is performed and the *prasādam* is distributed amongst family members and guests. According to the Vedic principles, there must always be a guest in a householder's house. In my childhood I have actually seen my father receive not less than four guests every day, and in those days my father's income was not very great. Nonetheless, there was no difficulty in offering *prasādam* to at least four guests every day. According to Vedic principles, before taking lunch a householder should go outside and shout very loudly to see if there is anyone without food. In this way he invites people to take *prasādam*. If someone comes, the householder offers him *prasādam*. And if there is not much left, he should offer his own portion to the guest. If no one responds to his call, the householder can accept his own lunch. Thus the householder's life is also a kind of austerity. Because of this, the householder's life is called the *gṛhastha-āśrama*. Although a person may live with his wife and children happily in Krishna consciousness, he also observes the regulative principles followed in any temple. If there is no Krishna consciousness, the householder's abode is called a *gṛhamedhī's* house. Householders in Krishna consciousness are actually *gṛhasthas* — that is, those living in the *āśrama* with their families and children. Sri Adwaita Prabhu was an ideal *gṛhastha*, and his house was the ideal *gṛhastha-āśrama*.

next column ☞

The Battle Between Prahlad Maharaja And Lord Narayan

Srila Sanatan Goswami

Śrī Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta *1.4.11*

yaḥ pīta-vāso-'ṅghri-saroja-dṛṣṭyai
gacchan vanaṁ naimiṣakaṁ kadācit
nārāyaṇenāhava-toṣitena
proktas tvayā hanta sadā jito 'smi

[Narada Muni to Prahlad Maharaja:] You once went to the Naimisha Forest to have *darśana* of Narayan, who is known as "the Lord in yellow dress." While on the road you satisfied the Lord in combat, and He told you, "Yes, I am always conquered by you!"

COMMENTARY: This incident is recounted in a number of scriptures, including the *Vāmana Purāṇa* (7). Once Prahlad took a trip to Naimisharanya to see Lord Pitavasa, the beautiful form of the Supreme Lord. While traveling on the road he met a strange person who was dressed like an austere renunciant but was carrying a warrior's bow and arrows. Prahlad assumed from this person's contradictory attire that he must be some hypocrite abusing the true principles of religion. Therefore Prahlad started a fight with the *sannyāsī,* vowing "I swear I shall defeat you!" But even after several days of dueling, Prahlad could not subdue this adversary.

Early one morning before resuming the battle, Prahlad worshiped his personal deity. He then saw his opponent standing nearby, wearing the same garland he had just offered the deity. Prahlad suddenly recognized that the stranger was Lord Pitavas, Narayan himself. Thereupon offering prayers to that opponent with all the competence at his command, Prahlad tried to satisfy him. In response, the Lord touched him with His lotus hand, which relieved Prahlad from the fatigue of fighting and from all anxiety. Prahlad asked Lord Pitavas what to do about having transgressed the duty of a *kṣatriya* by having made a promise — namely to defeat his opponent — and not having fulfilled it. The Lord, fully satisfied by the sport of fighting with Prahlad, told him, "But I am always defeated by you!"

— Translated from the original Sanskrit, with a summary of the author's *Dig-darśinī* commentary, by Gopiparanadhana Das. Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. Los Angeles. 2002.

The Greatest Fool

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

There was one great *vaiṣṇava* Babaji Maharaja. He was very peaceful and blissful because he had gotten the wealth of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Once that Babaji Maharaja was sitting underneath a tree with some of his followers speaking *kṛṣṇa-kathā* and doing *bhajana* and *kīrtana*. The king of that country happened to pass by, followed by his ministers, commander-in-chief, and many people in a grand procession. The king looked at that Babaji Maharaja and asked his minister, "Who is he? What is he doing?"

The minister said, "Maharaja, he is a *mahā-mūrkha,* a great fool. He has no intelligence. He only creates disturbances."

Then king went ahead, but that night he thought very deeply, "Oh, there is some *mahā-mūrkha* in my kingdom? All right. Whoever is the greatest fool, the greatest *mūrkha* in my kingdom, I'll give him a reward."

The next morning he called his minister and gave him a gold coin. "This is a reward. Find out who is the greatest *mūrkha* in my kingdom. This coin should be awarded to him. Find that person and report back to me in the evening."

The minister took the gold coin and went around asking various persons, "Are you a *mūrkha*?" People laughed and replied, "Why? Are you a *mūrkha?* I am not a *mūrkha*." No one was willing to accept that he was a fool.

After searching for the whole day and not finding anyone, he was tired and morose. That evening he finally came to the cottage of the great *vaiṣṇava*. Babaji Maharaja was sitting there happily, peacefully, blissfully chanting. The Babaji looked at the minister's face. "You are a minister of the king. Why do you look so morose? What has happened to you?"

The minister said, "The king told me to find the greatest *mūrkha* in his kingdom and give a reward to him. However, I couldn't find anyone. Therefore I am very morose. What will I report? The king will inflict punishment on me."

The *sādhu* said, "Why should the king inflict punishment on you? All right. I am a *mahā-mūrkha*. So give me that reward." The minister gave him the gold coin and immediately Babaji Maharaja threw it into the garbage pit. The minister was amazed. "He threw a gold coin in the garbage. Definitely he is a *mahā-mūrkha*."

So he went to the king and reported. "O king, that Babaji Maharaja is definitely a *mahā-mūrkha*. I gave him that gold coin and he immediately threw it in a garbage pit." The king agreed that definitely the minister had found a *mahā-mūrkha*."

A few years passed and the king was on his deathbed. His queens, sons, grandsons, daughters, whole family, the whole kingdom, all the people were crying, "Our king is dying." The king was very morose and lamenting. He was also crying. The Babaji Maharaja went to him and asked, "O king, why are you crying? Why do you look morose? Why are you lamenting? What has happened to you?"

"I am going to die."

"You are going to die? You may die, but you have earned so much wealth. You are the king. You are such an opulent person, why are you so morose? Will not all this wealth and opulence go with you? Won't you take all these things with you?"

"No, no. I cannot take these things. Throughout my life I earned so much wealth, but I cannot take any of it with me. I am dying. I am going alone. All will stay here."

The Babaji said, "Then you have not earned real wealth. You have earned that which is not wealth. You are definitely a fool, a *mahā-mūrkha*, the greatest fool. You have not earned real wealth that will follow you. Real wealth is *bhakti-dhana*, *paramārtha dhana*, *prema-dhana* — the wealth of love of God. Only that wealth will follow you. The material world is subject to destruction. Actually, it is not wealth at all. It will never follow you. You cannot take it with you. Everything will stay here and be subject to destruction. You leave this world alone. One who has not earned real wealth is the greatest fool. You are the greatest fool in this kingdom and you deserve this reward. Take this gold coin. I have brought it for you."

Mahaprabhu came and gave us real wealth, *prema-dhana*:

prema-dhana vinā vyartha daridra jīvana
'dāsa' kari' vetana more deha prema-dhana

[In *Cc. antya* 20.37, Mahaprabhu said:] "O Lord, I am truly poor. My life is useless because I am bereft of real wealth — *prema-dhana*. Please make me your servant. Let me serve you. I don't want any wealth, any remuneration for my service. I only want the wealth of *prema*."

na dhanaṁ na janaṁ na sundarīṁ
kavitāṁ vā jagad-īśa kāmaye
mama janmani janmanīśvare
bhavatād bhaktir ahaitukī tvayi

In the fourth verse of his *Śikṣāṣṭaka* prayers, Mahaprabhu has taught us: "I don't want material wealth, I don't want material followers, I don't want a beautiful lady to enjoy, I don't want *mukti*. I only want unalloyed devotion to Krishna. Life after life I'll serve your lotus feet and give you all pleasure, all enjoyment. I don't ask anything for myself." That is real wealth — *prema-dhana*. Mahaprabhu gives that wealth through chanting the holy name:

hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare

niraparādhe nāma laile pāya prema-dhana
mukhya pate jīva paya kṛṣṇa prema dhana

The chief result of chanting *hare kṛṣṇa* is to get *kṛṣṇa-prema*. If your chanting is offenseless and pure then you will definitely get *kṛṣṇa-prema*. You will get Krishna. Krishna is the object of love and you'll get that love by chanting the pure name. By getting that love, you will get Krishna, who is *pūrṇa-brahma*, and you'll never feel incomplete. That is real wealth. If you can't earn that wealth then you are truly a great fool.

— From a lecture in Bhubaneswar, 14 October 1995.

In Praise of the Divine Couple

Yugalāṣṭakam

By Sripad Madhavendra Puri

vṛndāvana-vihārāḍyau saccidānanda-vigrahau
maṇi-maṇḍapa-madhyasthau rādhā-kṛṣṇau namāmy aham

unto the pair engaged in sportive dalliance in Vrindavan
the pair whose forms abound with eternity, knowledge and bliss
the pair who are seated in the center of a jeweled pavilion
I bow unto Radha and Krishna.

pīta-nila-paṭau śāntau śyāma-gaura-kalevarau
sadā rāsa-ratau satyau rādhā-kṛṣṇau namāmy aham

unto the pair who wear yellow and blue garments
the pair who are sublimely peaceful
the pair whose bodies emit dark and fair auras
the pair who are perpetually enjoying the *rāsa*-dance
the pair who are embodiments of divine truth
I bow unto Radha and Krishna.

bhāvāviṣṭau sadā ramyau rāsa-cāturya-paṇḍitau
muralī-gāna-tattva-jñau rādhā-kṛṣṇau namāmy aham

unto the pair who are overwhelmed with ecstatic emotions
the pair who are always very captivating
the pair who are accomplished in devising *rāsa*-dance variations
the pair who know the divine potency of their flute-playing
I bow unto Radha and Krishna.

yamunopa-vanāvāsau kadamba-nava-mandirau
kalpa-druma-vanādhīśau rādhā-kṛṣṇau namāmy aham

unto the pair who live in the gardens by the Yamunā river
the pair who sport in a blossoming kadamba-tree cottage
the pair who are the Lords of the desire-tree forest
I bow unto Radha and Krishna.

yamunā-snāna-subhagau govardhana-vilāsinau
divya-mandāra-mālāḍyau rādhā-kṛṣṇau namāmy aham

unto the pair who are fond of bathing in the Yamuna
the pair who are fond of playing games on Govardhan Hill
the pair who are fond of wearing garlands of divine *mandara* flowers
I bow unto Radha and Krishna.

mañjīra-rañjita-padau nāsāgra-gaja-mauktikau
madhura-smera-sumukhau rādhā-kṛṣṇau namāmy aham

unto the pair whose feet are adorned with tinkling anklets
the pair whose magnificent pearls dangle from the tips of their noses
the pair whose lovely faces beam with sweet gentle smiles
I bow unto Radha and Krishna.

ananta-koṭi-brahmāṇḍe sṛṣṭi-sthity-anta-kāriṇau
mohinau sarva-lokānāṁ rādhā-kṛṣṇau namāmy aham

unto the pair who cause the creation, maintenance, and annihilation of limitless millions of material universes
the pair who are the enchanters of all planets and peoples
I bow unto Radha and Krishna.

paraspara-rasāviṣṭhau paraspara-gaṇa-priyau
rasa-sāgara-sampannau rādhā-kṛṣṇau namāmy aham

unto the pair who are overcome with the rasa of each other
the pair who are dear to each others' devotees
the pair who are utterly consumed in the ocean of *rasa*
I bow unto Radha and Krishna.

— Translated by Sri Dasarath Suta Das.

Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications
c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026
Email: katha@gopaljiu.org
Website: www.gopaljiu.org
Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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